

Casing ceremony marks brigade's departure

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

As a contingent of soldiers representing 2nd Brigade and Division Artillery respond to the commands of a lone bugler during a casing ceremony, the remaining soldiers from those units are busy packing out of their barracks and readying themselves for the rapidly approaching deployment to Kosovo.

The casing ceremony Nov. 9 symbolically marked the departure of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team for its peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. The deployment is expected to last through June 2001.

After each member of the official party presented brief comments to the soldiers and guests, each 2nd Brigade unit, except 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, ceremoniously cased its colors. 1-6th Infantry will remain in Baumholder to serve as 2nd Brigade's rear detachment. Collectively, all supporting agencies staying behind in Baumholder, to include the 222nd Base Support Battalion, will be known as Task Force Baumholder.

The deploying units' colors will be uncased in Kosovo during a change of command ceremony where Brig. Gen. Kenneth J. Quinlan will assume command of Task Force Falcon from Brig. Gen. Dennis E. Hardy.

Sergeants major from 2nd Brigade and Division Artillery orchestrated the entire casing ceremony. Leading the formation was 2nd Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Sherman J. Fuller. The other sergeants major on point were William K. Gunter, 1st Battalion 6th Infantry Regiment; Jose Gomez Jr., 2nd Battalion 6th Infantry Regiment; Christopher Taylor, 1st Battalion 35th Armor

Regiment; Robert Winzenreid, 40th Engineer Battalion; Jose R. Blanco, 47th Forward Support Battalion; and Douglas C. Delano, 4th Battalion 27th Field Artillery Regiment.

The 1st Armored Division Band provided the musical backdrop, adding to the pageantry of the event.

As part of the ceremony Col. Gene C. Kamena, 2nd Brigade Combat Team commander, awarded the Shield of Sparta to Julie Jordan and Sabina Mann for their many years of dedicated service. Kamena also recognized several family support group volunteers for the support and dedication they provided to their respective units.

In his comments, Kamena said the senior leadership of the Army is faced with the challenge of transforming the army of today into a lighter, more deployable and more lethal force. "I would offer to the senior leaders of our Army a perfect case study, this combat team," he said. "We have honed both our war fighting skills and our peace keeping skills," he added.

Turning to the families, Kamena said, "We cannot, we must not, overlook their sacrifices. We owe them our gratitude and our support. The leaders of this combat team have worked very hard to mitigate many issues our families will face while we are deployed. Our rear detachment, Task Force Baumholder, is ready to face those challenges.

"...With the knowledge that things will be okay back here in Baumholder, after our departure, our soldiers can and will focus on the task at hand.

"To the soldiers of the Iron Brigade, I know you are ready, you are well trained and you're motivated. I'm very proud of you. I consider it



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Command Sgt. Maj. Sherman J. Fuller, left, cases the 2nd Brigade colors with the assistance of Col. Gene C. Kamena, 2nd Brigade Combat Team commander, during a ceremony that officially marked the departure of soldiers for Kosovo.

an honor to serve with you and I would do so anywhere, anytime," said Kamena.

Quinlan, the Task Force Falcon commander-elect, echoed Kamena's praise for the soldiers by adding, "As we begin the deployment phase, you must carry the standards and high discipline you displayed during the mission rehearsal exercise forward into Kosovo.

"On the 18th of December the 2nd Brigade Combat Team will once again be on point for the United States of America in the Balkans."

"It is fitting that this ceremony should be led and executed by NCOs because it is the NCOs, the sergeants, who are at the point of the spear every day in Kosovo. Yes, NCOs are the backbone of Task Force Falcon and our Army. It is not an overused or trite saying, rather, it's the central reason our Army today has no peer in the world," said Quinlan.

"The NCO Creed and the Flat Ass Rules are your Bible. Read them every day. Live them every minute. Maintain iron discipline throughout our entire deployment and treat

everybody with dignity and respect. If we do those things, we will advance the peace process and bring everybody home."

Maj. Gen. George W. Casey Jr., 1st Armored Division commander, focused his remarks on deployment preparation and the mission in Kosovo. On the preparation side, Casey assured spouses that no effort was spared to ensure that every soldier in Task Force Falcon is trained and ready for the mission.

"A year ago we established as our watch words, no untrained soldiers will go in harms way. They've (the soldiers) worked hard at it ever since. We put them through a very rigorous mission rehearsal exercise in October and we've had numerous visits to Task Force Falcon and they are prepared.

"On the 18th of December the 2nd Brigade Combat Team will once again be on point for the United States of America in the Balkans," said Casey.

On the mission, Casey said, "...The mission that these soldiers will perform, is to establish and maintain a secure environment so that the civil implementation can succeed."

Casey explained that a year ago in Kosovo there was no government in Kosovo. "Before the air campaign, 200,000 Serbs had been basically running an Apartheid government ruling 2 million Albanians with an iron hand," he said.

"A lot of progress had been made since the 1st Armored Division took the mission in June. Over-

all levels of violence are down. Construction is booming, and the United Nations police have accepted primacy in our sector. That means that they have taken on the basic law enforcement mission, which is a big relief for our soldiers," said Casey.

He added that there have also been elections in Yugoslavia and Kosovo. "The ultimate outcome of the one in Yugoslavia remains to be seen," he said. He explained that with President Malosavic out of power, "The prospects for the reintegration of Yugoslavia into the European community of nations and renewed regional stability are significantly enhanced."

Casey then outlined the three 1st AD goals while in Kosovo. "The first is to be good soldiers every day. Secondly we should advance civil implementation. We, with our experience in the Balkans, know full well that we are not going to close this out on our watch. But we will move the ball forward every day and we will leave the sector better than we found it. And the last, we should bring everybody home. We owe that to you and we owe that to ourselves. Success in Kosovo is critical to U.S. national security interests. The U.S. government has a lot invested in Kosovo and NATO must succeed here,"

He closed by saying, "Undeniably this is a tough mission. But you could not be better prepared, better trained, better equipped, or better led. I know you will make a difference in the Balkans yet again."



Photo by Bernd "Bernie" Mai

While 2nd Brigade's official departure ceremony is under way at the Hall of Champions, a 2nd Brigade soldier packs out and verifies the contents of his storage goods by signing an inventory sheet.

First snowfall should not be reason to panic

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

If history teaches us anything, Baumholder is on the brink of getting its first snowfall of the season. Last year, the first snowfall hit Baumholder during the early hours of Nov. 17. The 222nd Base Support Battalion commander elevated the local road conditions from green to amber and issued a two-hour delay for all schools in the Baumholder military community.

By 5 a.m., the AFN affiliates in Kaiserslautern and Frankfurt were reporting Baumholder's road conditions and a two-hour delay for schools.

Two days later, after the school buses were already in route, the Baumholder area was hit with its first healthy snowfall and the road conditions went red at about 9 a.m.

Two years ago, Baumholder roads went "Red" on Dec. 9 after an entire morning of snowfall covered Baumholder with four inches of the white powder.

Like clockwork, once the first snow flakes hit the ground Baumholder residents reach for their phones and inundate the 222nd BSB command group and military police with an avalanche of questions like "Are the schools closed?" "Is the post closed?" "What facilities are closed and which are open?" "Is it safe to drive to the PX or commissary?"

Up front, community residents should not call the military police as the influx of calls will tie up the phone lines and prevent their timely

response to a possible emergency

The initial panic that ensues with the first snowfall of the season was not as intense last year, mainly because the snowfall was not as severe. The confusion often lies in the definition of road conditions and who they apply to.

During adverse weather conditions, people often mistakenly believe a road condition advisory such as "Amber" or "Red" applies to all motorists. This is not the case. Here are a few facts that may help.

Just the facts

The most common weather related report heard over AFN radio and television and other alert channels pertains to road conditions. A road condition report applies only to military vehicles and restricts operators to various degrees of travel. It does not apply to civilian vehicles. Motorists traveling to work in their own cars should use road condition announcements to help them take appropriate safety measures when traveling to and from work.

Some AFN affiliates will report actual road condition, like icy, slippery, snow covered, etc., instead of color code conditions for military vehicles. These notices may be used by motorists driving their personal vehicles to determine appropriate travel plans.

To obtain road conditions during duty hours, call your unit or the 222nd Base Support Battalion operations officer at 485-1530. After duty hours, call the 222nd BSB staff duty personnel at 485-6150 or 06783-6-6150.

AFN Kaiserslautern can be heard by tuning your radio to:

100.2 FM, or 1107 AM.

To receive information from AFN Frankfurt, turn your radio to:

98.7 FM, or 873 AM.

Road conditions are also heard in English on the German radio station RPR 1 at frequencies **98.1 FM, or 103.3 FM.**

Another announcement often heard during adverse weather is a delay in reporting to work. If, for example, AFN reports that all Baumholder personnel are authorized a two-hour delay in reporting to work, this means that motorists have two additional hours to report to work. It doesn't mean people should role over and go back to sleep.

The intent of a delay is to allow persons who don't live close to their work a reasonable amount of time to report to work in a safe manner. Those who live on post or do not commute are expected to report to work on time.

The third and most extreme action a commander may take is to close an installation as a result of dangerous weather conditions. This means that all facilities are closed — including schools, commissaries, exchanges, and shoppettes. It does not mean everyone has a day off to go shopping or run errands. For one, all these places will be closed. People should not be out on the road during extreme inclement weather.

During a post closure or a delay, military and civilian mission-essential personnel should coordinate their reporting time with their chain



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

One of the first snowfalls last year leaves the 222nd Base Support Battalion headquarters under a blanket of snow.

of command as appropriate.

Another aspect of closures and delays is the accountability for missed work hours. Military members do not need to record this downtime. However, if a military member was on leave during a closure, that day will be counted as leave.

Civilian employees are placed on administrative leave during a post closure. Those on leave during a closure will remain on leave, just as military members. This applies to American and local national

civilian employees.

A post closure does not affect the leave status that a member might be on during that time. Civilian employees who don't live near their place of work may determine on their own if they can make it to work or not.

If a civilian employee determines that it is unsafe to travel, he or she must report that time as regular leave (except during a post closure) and advise their supervisor accordingly. The bottom line is: use common sense.

Commissaries close

The Baumholder, Idar-Oberstein and Neubrück Commissaries will close at 4 p.m. Dec. 6 for their Christmas party. They will also close Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas. For more information, call mil 485-6666, or civ (06783) 6-6666.

Post office adds hours

The Baumholder post office has expanded its hours of operation to accommodate the increase in letters and packages during the holiday season. Expanded hours of operation for the main post office are:

Mondays—Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursdays, noon to 6 p.m.

Saturday openings include Dec 2, 9, and 16, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mail going MPS to Kosovo will continue to go through the unit mail clerks until Dec. 23 due to the deployment of soldiers.

The Strassburg post office will be open Mondays, Wednesdays,

Post notes

and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

To ensure packages and letters to the U.S. are delivered before Christmas, customers should mail them by the following dates:

Dec. 4, PAL parcels

Dec. 11, priority parcels and first class letters

Dec. 18, express mail

For more information contact the postal officer at mil 485-6429/7502.

School needs coach

A wrestling coach is needed at Baumholder American High School. Experience is required. For more information call Dom Calabria at mil 485-7590.

See your VA rep

A Veterans Administration Representative will be in Baumholder Dec. 19 at 9 a.m.

This briefing is open to the pub-

lic, and all members of the community are encouraged to attend. Call the Army Career and Alumni Program Center at mil 485-6741/6330 or civ (06783) 6-6741/6330 to register for the Dec. 19 VA briefing.

ACAP classes

Transitioning soldiers and their family members can take advantage of the following ACAP classes scheduled for November and December:

ACAP is sponsoring the VA briefing on Nov. 28 at 9 a.m. and Dec. 19 at 9 a.m. Call mil 485-6741/6330 or civ (06783) 6-6741/6330 to schedule an appointment.

ACAP pre-separation briefings are scheduled every morning at 9 a.m. Mondays through Fridays.

ACS outlook

The International Spouses Club

meets Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. - noon in the Army Community Services lounge. The next Newcomers Coffee is Dec. 5, from 10 - 10:30 a.m. in the ACS lounge.

Army Community Services and the Baumholder Library are offering a story hour for children Nov. 23. Story hours are offered from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. for ages 0 to 18 months and 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. for ages 19 months through school age.

ACS calendar

Nov. 29

Anger Management

Dec. 1

Workplace Communications

Dec. 4

Successful Parenting

Employment Orientation

Resumix Workshop

Dec. 5

Stress Management

Newcomers Coffee

International Spouses Club

Raising Responsible Kids

Dec. 6

Anger Management

Resumix Workshop at Cyber Cafe

Banking and Checking Accounts

Dec. 7

Child Safety and Supervision

Dec. 8

Resume and Cover Letters

Dec. 11

Successful Parenting

Employment Orientation

Resumix Workshop

Dec. 12

Stress Management

Step Family Relationships

Dec. 13

Conflict Resolution

Appropriate Touch

Fixing Financial Problems

For information call mil 485-8188, or civ (06783) 6-8188.

Swim camps keep children busy on days off

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

One of the best kept secrets of working parents who need a place for their children to go on days off from school is about to be let out. The staff at Baumholder's indoor pool offers one- or two-day swim camps about eight times a year for children during their days off from school. Because Baumholder is the only military community in Europe that has an indoor pool, the camps can be offered year 'round.

"Most of the time when the kids are off from school, parents are working and the children don't have a place to go. The swim camps give them an opportunity to have some fun with proper supervision and keeps them off the street," said Brigitta Bruehl, fitness coordinator.

Swimming, however, is not the only activity children are treated to during a swim camp. The recent swim camp saw 26 children participating in activities like water relays, arts and crafts, water safety,

free swim time and swimming lessons that included basic strokes and floating. The more advanced children received diving instructions and more advanced swimming lessons. The children were also treated to a lunch from Burger King. Children who could not swim were suited with flotation vests so they could participate in the fun.

"During the organized sessions, we separate the children by age groups and swimming ability," said Bruehl. For the free swim session, the pool staff brought out plenty crocodile and whale floats for the children to enjoy.

"We're hoping to organize another swim camp during Christmas vacation," said Bruehl. Much will depend on staff availability, she explained.

The word for these camps usually goes out through the schools. The pool staff makes flyers and gives them to the schools to hand out to the children. "We don't really need a lot of advertisement because the camps fill up pretty quick," said Bruehl.

Oh well, the secret's out.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Children enjoy free swim time during the recent swim camp at Baumholder's indoor pool. The pool offers swim camps throughout the year during several says off from school.

Santa dumps red suit to show at swimming party

This Christmas, Santa trades his traditional red suit with white trim for beach comber shorts and a loud Hawaiian shirt to take part in a Christmas Watery Wonderland Splash Party Dec. 20 from 6 – 8 p.m. at Baumholder's indoor pool.

Admission to the aquatic Christmas activities is \$1 for children and free for

parents. Each child will receive a gift from the jolly ol' elf when he arrives in a sleigh pulled by water treading reindeer.

"Everyone should come prepared to swim," said Brigitta Bruehl, fitness coordinator. "As in the past, several of our activities have been open to German children and this one is no exception. Children from

the local German community are also welcome to join in the fun. Since Christmas is a time for sharing, what better way to share than to give everyone an opportunity to enjoy a Christmas-like atmosphere at the pool," she said. A variety of water related activities are planned for the afternoon.

Members of the Deutsche

Lebensrettungs Gesellschaft, German life-guard association, will also be on hand for the festivities and to ensure everyone's safety.

After Santa passes out his Christmas treasures the pool staff will offer organized water activities, followed by free swim time for everyone.

Winter tires, common sense a good combination for survival

By Helmut Kaufmann
222nd Base Support Battalion Safety Office

Fog, wet leaves, and heavy rain tell us that winter is just around the corner.

Since Baumholder's winter conditions are historically more severe than in other military communities, residents should not hesitate any longer to winterize their cars. Those who wait for the first snow of the season we will have waited too long and an appointment with the automobile garages or tire shops will be hard to find.

There is no doubt that mud and snow tires provide better traction for motorists, making winter driving much easier and safer. Modern winter tires have almost the same suspension and noise comfort as summer tires.

Tests by German Automobile Clubs have proven that because of the rubber mixture, summer tires loose up to 60 percent of their trac-



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Baumholder's streets can get slippery during winter months.

tion when temperatures drop to 5 or 10 degrees centigrade. Additionally, All weather tires can give motorists a false feeling of safety. The rubber mixture could become too soft for a hot summer day tire tread will be lost more rapidly. During winter, with temperatures around the freezing point, the rubber on all weather tires will become hard, results in less traction on the road.

Tests conducted by the Michelin tire factory resulted in an

extended stopping distance of four to six meters at a speed of 80 kilometers on a dry surface and a temperature of 5 degrees centigrade. On a wet surface and a temperature of 10 degrees centigrade, the stopping distance was four meters less with mud and snow tires than with regular summer tires. This distance would be two to three times more on a snow packed road. The important thing to remember is that any reduced stopping distance and in-

creased traction can save lives or prevent severe injuries.

Vehicles equipped with ABS are at a disadvantage with summer or all weather tires on snow or ice covered roads. To equalize this disadvantage, it is an absolute must to use mud and snow tires.

Before purchasing mud and snow tires, motorists must ensure the top speed of the their vehicle is not higher than the rating on the tires. A sticker showing the speed rating of the tires must be affixed to the speedometer or dashboard if

the vehicle speed exceeds that of the tire rating. Additionally, normal tire pressure should be raised a couple of pounds to ensure optimum traction between the tire tread and road surface.

Defensive driving techniques such as adjusting speed to the road and weather conditions, avoiding excessive accelerations or braking in curves and always expecting black ice or frozen moisture, in conjunction with a mechanically safe vehicle, will help motorists make it safely through this winter season.

Operation Good Cheer brings German families, GIs together

By Ignacio “Iggy” Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

The Army can’t send every soldier home to his family for the holidays but Operation Good Cheer can provide some soldiers with a “holiday” family.

Operation Good Cheer is an annual program that brings German families together with American soldiers during the holidays. German families participating in the program open their homes to American soldiers and invite them to share Christmas, Christmas dinner, and often, New Years with them.

“The fact that German families are willing to open their homes and share the holidays with our soldiers demonstrates that this program not only provides memorable experiences for our soldiers, it also serves to enhance German-American friendships at the grass-roots level,” said Lt. Col. Eric Wagenaar, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander.

Units wishing to participate are asked

to appoint a project officer and provide a by-name roster of those soldiers selected to Public Affairs by Dec. 6 or as soon as possible.

A get-together is scheduled for Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. at the restaurant Haus Aulenbach. This meeting will allow soldiers and families to get acquainted and make arrangements for the holidays. Visitation with German families can last from one to three days.

Transportation to and from the host family’s home during the holidays will be the responsibility of the soldier and the unit. However, experience has shown that most families provide transportation for the soldiers.

Soldiers selected will be representing their commander, their unit, the Baumholder community and the U.S. Army. The Public Affairs Office staff is available to help brief selected soldiers on proper standards of conduct and appearance.

For more information on Operation Good Cheer call the Public Affairs Office at 485-1600/7517, or Fax 485-7415.

DIVARTY opens Red Leg Room

By Jennifer R. Babich
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

With the snap of a photo and the break of a ribbon, Division Artillery commander Col. Daniel Nolan III and his wife Ann recently conducted the official opening of Baumholder’s newest regimental room, the Division Artillery “Red Leg Room.”

Located in the Rheinlander just downstairs from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team Regimental Room, the DIVARTY “Red Leg Room” features two rooms decorated in artillery red that will be used for such ceremonial functions as reenlistments, promotions, and

award ceremonies, as well as unit social events.

“We’re working hand-in-hand to make the Rheinlander a better place,” emphasized DIVARTY Lt. Col. Steve Payne, as he discussed the importance of the room.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Nolan expressed his thanks to Command Sgt. Maj. Gilbert Canuela and his wife Robin for their hard work and dedication, along with all those who helped make the “Red Leg Room” a reality.

Wielding a cavalry sword once owned by Col. Nolan’s grandfather, the Nolan’s wrapped up the ceremony in grand style with a cake-cutting.

Certificates provide holiday meals

The Holiday Food Gift Certificate Program is designed to provide gift certificates for seasonal food to needy Families in the Baumholder community.

Army Community Services Consumer Affairs and the Financial Readiness Program coordinate the program.

Community units, clubs, and individuals are asked to support the program with cash contributions. Monetary donations may be dropped off at Chapel One or ACS. Checks should be made out to the “Helping Hands Fund.”

Volunteers are also needed to assist with preparing the food certificates.

“If everyone in the community were to donate \$1 toward the food basket program, it would be an extremely prosperous, warm, and wealthy Christmas for all families in Baumholder,” said Stephanie Fluellen of ACS.

“By helping the holiday giving programs in your community you can help others share in the joy of the season,” she said.

For more information call Pat Ratcliff or Stephanie Fluellen at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783)6-8188.